

123 We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow [411] carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They [412] were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

[621] In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small [342] yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chona** close by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha* [162] *Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and [164] children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and [146] *framboesia*. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

144 Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even [177] their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to [142] Vadda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and up-standing frizzly hair.

411 They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, [524] but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

342 The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry [415] grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

262 Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukhan*† and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of [224] the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels [231] that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food [264] is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few [261] varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with [415] melted wax (*ilee setho*). Partial nomads, they spend many months [221] of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *kong*, or [222] *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

515 "How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

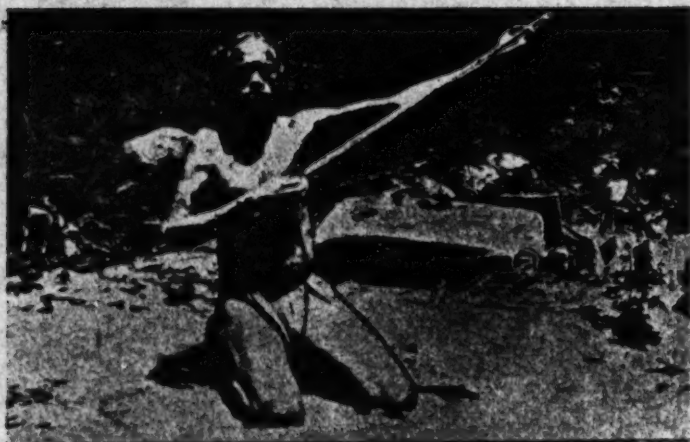
● 304 In answer to the question how they measured distances and what [276] constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile."

*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

†*Elerusine coracana*

‡*Minuscops kasandra*, *Hemicyclops sepiaria*, *Schleichera trijuga*, *Nephelium longana*, respectively.

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Method of measuring length of arrow shaft. (Page 76)

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Feathering the arrow. (Page 76)

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